

If you would like to volunteer to be a source for local assistance, please complete the following, detach, and mail to address on pamphlet.

Name _____
Address _____

Phone _____
Parish _____
Affiliation (if any) _____

☐ I Have information and/or expertise and would like to be contacted concerning the following:

1. Natural Communities:
- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Upland forests | <input type="checkbox"/> Prairies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flatwoods | <input type="checkbox"/> Bogs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marshes | <input type="checkbox"/> Sandhills |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coastal systems | <input type="checkbox"/> Old-growth-
virgin forests |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marine grass beds | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

2. Plants: _____

3. Animals: list species for which you have data
- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fishes | <input type="checkbox"/> Birds |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Amphibians | <input type="checkbox"/> Reptiles |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Invertebrates | <input type="checkbox"/> Mammals |

4. Other Significant Features:

<input type="checkbox"/> Geological	<input type="checkbox"/> Champion trees	<input type="checkbox"/> Rookeries
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____		

☐ I am interested in volunteering to “field Check” (verify) occurrences in the following regions or counties:

Louisiana

Natural Heritage

Program

www.wlf.louisiana.gov



Flatwoods Bog by D. Baker



Black Bear in Bottomland Hardwoods by D. Baker

Louisiana’s Natural Heritage

Louisiana’s natural heritage lies within the beauty and diversity of its wildlands. Cypress-tupelo swamps, bays, marshes, mangroves, bottomland hardwoods, chenier woodlands, and remnant prairies of our southern parishes. Beech-magnolia ravine forests and the flatwoods scattered with herbaceous bogs in our Florida parishes. Upland deciduous forests, longleaf pine savannahs, sandhills, forested canebreaks, and piney woods in our northern parishes.

These habitats harbor a multitude of native plants and animals. Although many are common and recognizable, some are quite rare, and a few exist nowhere else on earth. The roster of our state’s rare fauna and flora is long and includes such species as Bachman’s warbler, the southern redback salamander, bog, spice bush, yellow fringeless orchid, and the Louisiana blue-star.

Urbanization, exploration for oil and gas, industrial development, and agricultural expansion all take their toll on our natural lands. As this trend continues, it becomes essential that we identify, protect, and preserve areas of natural significance for the people of Louisiana today and tomorrow.

Our natural areas perform beneficial life-sustaining operations essential to humanity. The forests protect our watersheds, ensuring the quality of air and water and regulating flood-waters. The wetlands serve as vital nursery areas for fish and shellfish and buffer us against hurricane damage. In addition, natural areas are living lab-oratories for scientific study; gene banks of wild species for agricultural, medical, and industrial use; and refuges from urban life.

Natural Heritage Information on the WEB:

Access the LNHP web pages through the LA Dept. of Wildlife & Fisheries website at

www.wlf.louisiana.gov

Under “Experience Wildlife”, select **Natural Heritage**. Follow the links to the Natural Heritage web pages.

The Natural Heritage Program

The Louisiana Natural Heritage Program (LNHP), within the LA Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF), is part of the Natural Heritage Network. This network, originally developed by The Nature Conservancy and now coordinated by NatureServe, is designed to gather, organize and distribute standardized, detailed information on the biological diversity across all 50 U.S. states, Canada, Mexico, and parts of Latin America.

The LNHP, founded in 1984 through a partnership with the state of Louisiana and The Nature Conservancy, is now maintained by LDWF.

LNHP was founded with the goal of developing and maintaining a database on rare, threatened and endangered (r/t/e) species of plants and animals and natural communities for Louisiana.

In the process of working toward this goal, we have accumulated over 6,000 occurrences of r/t/e species, unique natural communities and other distinctive elements of natural diversity, and identified some 380 ecologically significant sites statewide. A detailed Element Occurrence Record (EOR), which includes precise locations, species population status, and habitat conditions and characteristics, is entered for each species occurrence in the LNHP database called

“Biotics”. Location for each element is mapped in Geographic Information System (GIS) format. Information for element occurrence records is generally gathered from LNHP staff field surveys, but is also obtained from survey contracts, state and federal government agencies, research studies, university contacts, herbaria, and Louisiana nature enthusiasts.

While LNHP has created an extensive database documenting Louisiana's native biological diversity, there are many natural areas in the state that have not yet been surveyed. Records for new occurrences are continuously being added to the database, and current records are updated as new information becomes available.



Forested Seep in Northwestern Louisiana

LNHP data is applied to land use decisions, environmental impact assessment, resource management, conservation planning, endangered species review, research and education. LNHP's work has also expanded beyond inventory to include research on threatened and endangered species and involvement in diverse conservation issues concerning nongame wildlife species and plants. The job is not complete, and because habitats change the nature of the task is dynamic.

Citizen Involvement

The Louisiana Natural Heritage Program relies on a wide variety of sources to maintain its ongoing inventory. You may know the location of an undisturbed plant community or the habitat

for an endangered rare plant or animal. If so, please contact this program so that the information can be verified and incorporated into the data bank.

As the inventory progresses, field surveys are necessary for site evaluations. Qualified biologists, naturalists, teachers, and others are invited to participate as field surveyors. Volunteer work by concerned citizens is a welcome and useful contribution to many aspects of the program. If you wish to volunteer some time, expertise, or information, or if you want to arrange for a presentation on the inventory, please contact:

Louisiana Natural Heritage Program
Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
P. O. Box 98000
Baton Rouge, LA 70898-9000
(225) 765-2821 www.wlf.louisiana.gov

A knowledgeable and active citizenry is the key to protecting our environment. The people of Louisiana are the guardians of their own natural heritage – everyone's support is needed to ensure that our outstanding natural areas are preserved for future generations.

